

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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P R 122220Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5689

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2333

E.O. 11652 - GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, ES, OAS, HO, CR, GT, NU

SUBJ: HONDURAS/SALVADOR: FONMIN MIN VIEWS ON COMMITTEE OF
SEVEN INITIATIVE

REF: SAN SALVADOR 2283

GUATEMALA FOR ROCAP; USCINCSO FOR POLAD

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH DCM JUNE 11 AND DURING CALL DCM AND I
MADE MORNING JUNE 12, FOREIGN MINISTER BORGONOVO DISCUSSED
PROPOSED INVITATION TO APPEAR BEFORE OAS COMMITTEE OF SEVEN AND
HIS VIEWS THEREOF. HE SAID AMBASSADOR BETRAND HAD REPORTED THAT
SEVILLA SACASA HAD ASKED HIM TO GET BORGONOVO'S INFORMAL REACTION
SHOULD THE C-7 EXTEND SUCH AN INVITATION. BORGONOVO TOLD
BETRAND HE PREFERRED TO STUDY THE MATTER BEFORE GIVING HIS
VIEWS. ADMITTING HIS RELUCTANCE, BORGONOVO TOLD US HE WAS
CONCERNED THAT THERE MIGHT BE LITTLE FOR HIM AND BATRES TO
DISCUSS WITH THE C-7 ASIDE FROM THE HISTORY OF THE JALAPA POST-
PONEMENT UNLESS SOME PROGRESS COULD BE ACHIEVED IN ADVANCE ABOUT
FUTURE POSITIVE STEPS TOWARD NORMALIZATION. HE ADDED HE MIGHT BE IN A
BETER POSITION TO RESPOND THE C-7 AFTER HE COMPLETES HIS
TECHNICAL STUDY OF THE BOUNDARYNISSUE (REFTEL) WHICH HE EXPECTED
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TO DO WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK.

2. WE POINTED OUT TO BORGONOVO THAT, JUSTLY OR NOT, EL SALVADOR WAS BEING HELD RESPONSIBLE IN INTERNATIONAL CIRCLES FOR THE JALAPA POSTPONEMENTM TO TELL THE C-7 THAT HE IS NOT YET PREPARED TO CONFER WITH IT, ESPECIALLY IF BATRES HAS AGREED TO GO, WOULD TEND TO CONFIRM THE IMPRESSION THAT EL SALVADOR IS NOT REALLY INTERESTED IN NORMALIZATION. WE NOTED THAT WHILE THE GOES WAS UNDERSTANDABLY MOST CONCERNED ABOUT ITS DOMESTIC AUDIENCE WHEN FORMULATING ITS POSITIONS ON THE HONDURAS/SALVADOR ISSUE, SALVADOR'S INTEREST WOULD SUFFER IF IT WERE TO NEGLECT ITS INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE. WE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR HIM TO CONSULT BATRES PRIOR TO ANY C-7 MEETING TO SEE IF SOME MUTUALLY HELPFUL SCENARIO COULD BE AGREED UPON AND THAT CONSULTATION WITH THE NEUTRAL CA THREE WHO ALSO SERVE ON THE C-7 COULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS AS WELL. BORGONOV FINALLY AGREED THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO MEET WITH THE C-7 BUT NOTED HE WOULD FIRST HAVE TO COMPLETE THE STAFF STUDY ON ATTENDANCE NOW UNDER PREPARATION IN THE MINISTRY AS WELL AS OBTAIN PRESIDENT MOLINA'S APPROVAL; NEXT WEEK WOULD BE THE EARLIEST HE COULD BE READY TO TRAVEL.

3. WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY SUGGESTED TO BORGONOVO THAT THE C-7 WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPATIENT WITH THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN BI-LATERAL NEGOTIATIONS AND SPECULATED THAT IT MIGHT COME UP WITH SOME ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS FOR SETTLEMENT SUCH AS USE OF THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE INTER AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT (IACPS). BORGONVO HAD LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMMITTEE BUT TOLD US TODAY THAT HE WAS HAVING HIS STAFF LOOK INTO IACPS FUNCTIONS TO DETERMINE THE MERITS OF SUCH A POSSIBLE PROPOSAL. HE MUSED THAT RECOURSE TO SOME MECHANISM OF THIS SORT COULD PROVE CONVENIENT IN GETTING THE GOH OFF THE HOOK DOMESTICALLY SINCE HONDURAN OPINION HAS BEEN CONDITIONED TO ACCEPTING A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM COMING FROM A THIRD PARTY OR ORGANIZATION. (WE BELIEVE BORGONOVO MEANT THAT IF SUCH A THIRD PARTY WERE TO PROPOSE A FORMULA TO RESOLVE THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE WHICH WAS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOES, IT WOULD BE MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOH THAN IF IT HAD COME FROM THE SALVADORANS THEMSELVES.) THE FOREIGN MINISTER NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR THE C-7 TO SUGGEST ALTERNATE METHODS FOR SETTLEMENT, THE GOES COULD NOT ACCEPT ANY ATTEMPT BY THE COMMITTEE TO IMPOSE ONE.

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4. BORGONOVO COMMENTED THAT HE FOUND IN HIS REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE BORDER PROBLEMS BETWEEN HONDURAS AND SALVADOR DURING THE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES VARIOUS INSTANCES WHEN A SETTLEMENT BETWEEN NEGOTIATORS HAD BEEN REACHED BUT THAT THE SOLUTION HAD BEEN SUBSEQUENTLY REPUDIATED BY THE GOH; THUS, HE SAID, SALVADOR INSISTS THAT ANY FUTURE ACCORD CONTAIN A FIRM COMMITMENT AND PRECISE RULES FOR BORDER DELINEATION THAT THE

GOH CANNOT SUBSEQUENTLY REPUDIATE.1/HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE TWO DISPUTANTS HAD AGREE ON ARBITRATION OF THE BOUNDARY BY THE THIRD PARTIES (IN THE 1890'S) BUT THAT THIS HAD FAILED TO PRODUCE A DEFINITIVE RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE; SALVADOR THEREFORE REMAINS VERY SKEPTICAL OF THIS APPROACH.

5.PCOMMENTING ON THE SPECULATION THAT SALVADOR MIGHT BE DELAYING NEGOTIATIONS IN HOPES THAT IT WOULD BETTER ITS BARGAINING STANCE WITH A WEAKER HONDURAN GOVERNMENT, BORGONOVO SAID THAT WHILE SOME OF HIS ADVISORS ADVANCED THIS ARGUMENT, OTHERS HAD TAKEN THE OPPOSITE POSITION; BUT HE CONSIDERED THIS TACTICAL QUESTION TO BE OF MINOR IMPORTANCE. FOR HIM THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION IS THE SUBSTANTIVE ONE OF THE DELINEATION OF THE BORDER AND THIS HAS YET TO BE RESOLVED.

6. COMMENT: IT APPEARS AT THIS POINT THAT BORGONOVO WILL ACCPET AN INVITATION BY THE C-7, ALBEIT UNEHTUUSIASTICALLY. HIS POSITION ON THE C-7 IS AKIN TO HIS VIEWS ON JALAPA; I.E., UNLESS THERE IS A PRIOR BREAKTHROUGH BY THE DISPUTANTS ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE OF BOUNDARY DELINEATION, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT A HEARING BEFORE THE C-7 WILL CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO THE NORMAPIZATION PROCESS.

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